

II. REMARKS

Claims 1-26 are pending in this application. By this Response, Applicant elects Group I (claims 1-24 and 26), with traverse. Prompt examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

In the Restriction Requirement, the Office asserts that the combination of a seal and support of claims 1-24 and 26 do not require the particulars of the subcombination of the support of claim 25. Specifically, the Office asserts that the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed, a bracket or support of another structure being capable of supporting the claimed seal. In addition, the Office asserts that the subcombination has separate utility.

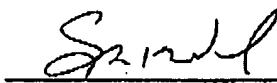
Applicant submits that there are grounds that justify searching the two Groups together. Specifically, Applicant submits that the subject matter of Group I (claims 1-24 and 26) and Group II (claim 25) are sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of the Group I invention would encompass a search for the subject matter of the Group II invention.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of Group I will encompass all of the subject matter of Group II, and thus a search for both Groups could be made without serious burden. See MPEP § 803, in which it is stated: "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicant and duplicative examining by the Office.

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In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement between Groups I and II. Should the Examiner require anything further from Applicants, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: 6/27/05

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